

THE TULANE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA
NEW ORLEANS

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY
1430 TULANE AVENUE

November 16, 1935

Dear Mike,

I can't tell you how much I have enjoyed your two recent letters, but was sorry that you were so upset when you wrote your first letter. I had heard none of the rumors about you, and if I had, I wouldn't have been upset, because I wouldn't have believed them, because I know well enough that you wouldn't have done such a thing, certainly without having informed your parents and I am sure that they felt the same way. It is a darned shame, however, that people can't keep their mouths shut and have to gossip all the time. I certainly hope that by now you are feeling your normal self again and that you will soon be able to go back using the big words without the least bit of hesitation at all.

I would have answered your first letter sooner, but have been so swamped with work that I just haven't been able to get at it. You can easily imagine how much work was waiting for me when I returned home from the West Coast after having been away three weeks. My desk looked as if a year's correspondence had accumulated and it almost amounted to that. It is still piled almost half to the ceiling, because I have had to neglect the correspondence considerably as I have had three papers to get ready for the Southern Medical which meets next week. I leave to-morrow for it and will be gone all of the week. As you know, I am Secretary of the Surgical Section of the Southern Medical and also Secretary for the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine, which meets in St. Louis with the Southern Medical. The meeting promises to be a good one, especially the Surgical Section, because practically everyone of the men is hand-picked. My three papers are on various subjects. Am talking before the General Session on postoperative treatment, am also talking before a lay crowd on pain in the abdomen, and Bob Strong and I have a paper before the Pediatrics Section on hypertrophic pyloric stenosis. I imagine, too, that I will be quite busy in St. Louis, because, as you know, Washington is my Alma Mater, and I have a large number of friends there.

The meeting in San Francisco was an excellent one, although I was never so fed up with a medical meeting in all my life as I was before I left there. It so happens that they kept me more than busy doing things which were more of an administrative nature for the College. My paper before the General Session, which was held on the night of the induction of officers, and it was the only scientific paper that evening, went over great. I think this was partly due to the fact that the presidential address and Dr. Crile's address eulogizing Dr. Franklin Martin were so long and tiresome that my scientific presentation, which lasted only twenty minutes, stood out in contrast. In the paper I emphasized the importance of acidity in the causation of peptic ulcer and among other things mentioned the detrimental effect of smoking as regards acidity. The Associated Press took up

this part of the presentation, and I believe it was published in every paper in the United States very much as follows, "Smoking, especially before breakfast, detrimental to patients with stomach ulcers and predisposes to the same." This Associated Press has certainly increased my fan mail, because half the mail which I found waiting for me when I got back was from patients with peptic ulcers who had read the Associated Press account. I have had a fine time answering some of them, because most of them have wanted copies of the paper. I have referred all of them to their family doctors. Mims suggested that I tell them all to come down here and that we will taken care of them and cure them of their ulcers. It would be a marvelous opportunity to develop a clientele at that.

On the way out I took Ak with me and spent two days in Tucson, where we picked out a school. He is at the Southern Arizona School for Boys and is extremely happy. There are only thirty-four boys in the school with seven instructors. He has his own horse and rides every afternoon for approximately two and a half hours. He is also taking rifle lessons and for his birthday Isabel and I sent him a repeating rifle, because he told me while I was there that he would be able to get a great deal more experience if he had his own, because those who did not own rifles had to wait their turn to use those owned by the School. They are allowed to shoot only under the direction of the rifle instructor so that it is perfectly safe. I feared that he might miss me while I was gone, but was very agreeably surprised when I got back to find out that he hadn't missed me at all. He is extremely happy, and I believe will be very much better for his sojourn in the delightful Arizona climate. As you know, my very good friend, Dr. Rudolph, is practicing in Tucson so that he has the personal supervision of one who is very much interested in him. He is kept so busy at the school, however, that the Rudolphs don't get to see much of him, and I think it is just as well, because it is making him more self reliant. You were indeed sweet to remember his birthday, and I know that he will be thrilled with your gift. We sent it on to him directly, and he should receive it in time for his birthday, which is to-day. It is mighty lonesome at home without him, but all of us feel that he is going to be better, which I am sure he will, so that we don't mind having him away.

I was very much interested in your description of the technic in the Surgical Clinic and awfully happy that you are getting a chance to do so many blood transfusions. I think they are wise in letting you do it, because they and their patients are the ones who profit by it. Ray is continuing on with the work here and is doing very well at it. He is able to hit the vein almost as well as you can and does a very pretty transfusion. We all miss you so much, however. To-day, after Mims had read your last letter he said, "There is only one Mike DeBakey and I can't tell you how much I miss him." I thought it was awfully sweet of him, and I can assure you that he meant every word of it.

On the way to California I saw Amos for a few minutes at the train, and then saw Terry and him on the way back. I think that they are coming down to New Orleans for Thanksgiving and will stay over for the Tulane-L.S.U. game. George Lilly went out to San Francisco, too, and he, Amelie, and Jane stopped off in San Antonio for two days on the way out. Amos is apparently working awfully hard and is doing very well. Howard Mahorner also went out for the meeting of the College this year, as he was taken in.

There isn't much happening around town. Our football team this

Dr. Sage

year isn't very good, and I am afraid that we are going to take a terrible beating from L.S.U., as they have a corking good team. The one high spot in the football season this year was the Tulane-Colgate game, which, of course, I had to miss when I was on the West Coast. Fortunately, it was the homecoming game, too, which indeed must have thrilled the old grads. The score was 14-6 in favor of Tulane, and every one says it was a corking good game. As you know, we had the Alumni Clinics two days preceding the game and everything went off well, they tell me.

While I was on my way back from San Francisco, a letter was forwarded to me from Dr. Hess, who is in charge of the nominating committee of the University of Illinois, asking me if I would reconsider the job there. I thought that I might wait until I got home to answer it, but just as I was leaving Tucson I received a wire from him asking me to consider it seriously and to accept. I wired back that I wasn't interested unless it would be possible for private patients to be seen and treated in the University Hospital, a thing which I knew was not possible because it is a state institution. Since I have returned home I have received a letter telling me they would not, but he wants to talk to me about in St. Louis, as he is going to be there for the Southern Medical Association.

While I was out West I had a delightful time with the Dumkes. I spent three days with them in Los Angeles before we went to San Francisco, then went up to San Francisco together, and then had two days in Los Angeles on the way back. They are planning on going to the Southern Surgical with us this year again. They are indeed delightful people and are marvelous people to be with. He is using your blood transfusion machine all the time and is very well pleased with it.

As yet Ambrose and Howard have not been reinstated at the hospital, although Vidrine promised the Dean as soon as possible after school opened they would be reconsidered by the Board and thought that it would be acted upon favorably. The rumor is that the present Long machine realizes the rôle that Vidrine has played in Long's death and that as soon as the election is over in January he will be ousted. Of course, no one knows whether this will be true or not, because these rumors have been circulated before.

Write us whenever you have time, as we are all very much interested in what you are doing and enjoy your letters very much.

Mrs. Ochsner and the children and everyone in the Department join me in sending our best regards.

Yours sincerely,

Alton Ochsner

Alton Ochsner, M.D.